

# Lucia Comnes



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**Love, Hope & Tyranny / Delfina Records / (DR384-LC07)**

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Website: **[www.luciacomnes.com](http://www.luciacomnes.com)**

“For as long as I remember, I’ve been writing and making music”, says Lucia Comnes. “I’m a student of language and folk music traditions, having spent more than a decade devoted to cross-cultural musical exploration, but this is the first album I’ve put words and music together as a songwriter. This album marks the beginning of a new chapter for me”. ‘Love, Hope & Tyranny’, her brand new album, finds Lucia’s gritty, passionate, yet crystal clear, singing set against her dazzling violin and fiddle playing and contributions from an array of fine supporting musicians. The

opening ‘No Hiding Place’ is indicative of what’s to come: ancient lines from old Appalachian ballads, a Bo-Diddley beat, strongly bowed fiddle and a swaggering group ambience. And, of course, there is the songwriting and those songs.

“Songwriting is an ongoing process”, she continues “one of listening, selection and refinement. We swim in the ocean of possibility, of ideas, of mystery, until we choose a direction - a story, an emotion, a desire - commit to it fully and let go of the rest. Only then can we create something unique and worth sharing. The songs on this album are my own stories, the stories of my ancestors, stories of our time, stories of the land, the sky and the sea. They are stories of love, hope & tyranny”.

Perhaps Lucia’s most valuable talent is her powerful imagination. One that breathes vivid imagery into the lyrics of her songs and infuses her fiddling with the spirit of the old musical traditions, whether they originate from Kilkenny, Kentucky, or Kosovo.

She has previously recorded three full-length albums. Her brand new, fourth – ‘Love, Hope & Tyranny’ was recorded at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley and produced with Jeffrey Wood (Luka Bloom, Penelope Houston) and Gawain Mathews. It features thirteen of Lucia’s original songs and an impressive list of contributors including background vocals from the delightful T Sisters.

She also finds time to front Lucia and Her Rockin’ Irish Band, delivering new takes on the Irish sound, with hair-raising vocal harmonies, soul-shaking harmonica solos, fierce melodies on the fiddle and songs in Irish Gaelic.

Driven by a powerhouse rhythm section of drums and bass, jigs and reels have never been so danceable.



As a solo performer Lucia recently accompanied Joan Baez in concert, was selected to perform ‘America The Beautiful’ on solo violin at the Oakland Coliseum to open the Raiders/Steelers Football game, opened

for Paul Brady (an Irish legend whose songs are hits for Bonnie Raitt, Tina Turner & Cher), collaborates with Irish artist, Liam Ó Maonlaí (Hothouse Flowers) and modern dance pioneer, Anna Halprin.

Born in San Francisco, Lucia Comnes started her professional career in 2002 as a vocalist with Kitka – the Oakland-based women’s a cappella vocal ensemble specializing in Balkan/Eastern European folk music. At the same time, she began delving deep into Irish music and studied with many fiddle masters (Martin Hayes, Kevin Burke, Oisín MacDiarmada) in the U.S. and Ireland. She also attended the Traditional Irish Music Program at University College, Cork, to study spoken Gaelic and sean-nos, or “old-style,” singing.



“I had a first hand experience or epiphany of sorts” she recalls “when I was a volunteer health worker in a rural Bolivian village at age 16. I did not speak Spanish well at the time so music was the only way I could really connect with the people I was serving. That was the keystone experience that set me on a devoted musical path for life. It was also a big influence as to why I pursued folk music”.

Lucia attended UC Berkeley and graduated from Long Island University’s Global Studies program in 2006 with a self-designed interdisciplinary degree called Music, Culture and Nature, following her research in Ireland, Greece, Turkey, and Bulgaria. An avid traveler throughout her life, Lucia has studied, visited, and

performed in more than 20 countries, including remote parts of Siberia.

Along with her passion for music, Lucia has made lifelong commitment to meeting the environmental challenges of our time. In her compositions, Lucia strives to bring people back in connection with nature and with their own roots.

“I have never been one to fit neatly into a musical box” she says. ‘My innate wildness pulls stronger than the desire to conform to a specific genre or classification.’ So, if the new album maybe seen by some as Americana, some as folk, some bluegrass and some acoustic rock, so be it. It’s nothing if not another brilliant and highly distinctive chapter in Lucia Comnes fascinating musical journey.

Lucia’s voice is *“singular... embedded with soul and spirit.”*  
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